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Letter from D. W. Lee to Anna Clemson, 1861 January 2

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Wilkesbarre Penn.
Jan. 2nd 1861

My dear Madam

Ch 26.

You will see from my date that I am in the State of coals and quakes, and though I see none of the latter I could scarcely disagree with the former for the weather is excessively cold.

The Susquehanna is within a hundred yards of my window, the beautiful valley lies stretched at length above and below me - on either side are snow mountains sparkling in the brilliant sunshine of a splendid day, and on the ice which covers the river, young men, and young women too, are gliding past my window on their skates with the grace and speed of swallows on the wing.

Is it want of patriotism or want of feeling to enjoy this (you will understand this apparent inconsequence) or is it want of sense or want of gratitude to the giver of all, not to be able to enjoy it? ought I to sit down and groan because

death, suffering and anxiety are every-
-where, or ought I to exclude the
disagreeables and see only the agreeables?
Perhaps the Epicurean philosophy
would be best (I'd most comfortable)
for the individual, but the Sympathetic
is absolutely necessary for the race, and
refine upon it as we will I suspect
individual organisation modified by
training will settle the question
without much regard to ethics.

But to leave high philosophy (which is
apt to end in nonsense and contradictions)
and descend to things terrestrial, let me
say I have just received your letter of the
29th Dec. and have sent the full length
to Mr. G. with your orders which shall be
carefully observed. And here let me remark
there is but one passage in your letter
which displeases me, and it is the
apology you make for "troubling me" and
"taking up my time"; let me again
assure you that any little commission
I can execute for you or I should give
me sincere pleasure. And now as
I have reached my former evening (for
I hope I am entirely forgiven by this
time) say to her that I am really

pleased she takes regular exercise
and that scorpers have been sub-
stituted for teeth. I feel quite
flattered too, that, these changes
I have had something to do with,
and that all my lectures were not
entirely thrown away. Like all
pedagogues, I like to see my pupils
make progress, and shall look for
my reward, in improved health and
happiness for her. Say to her she
must lose no opportunity of horseback
exercise, but take no long rides
which fatigue; for fatigue never strengthens
though exercise always does.

What you tell me of your late
innate surprise me, for I could not
have supposed such imprudence
possible. I can see and appreciate
mistakes of mischief where an object
is to be gained, but where there can
be no result, except mischief, I can
hardly comprehend the mind which
will make it, though indeed I
have seen instances enough of it.
I hope, however, that you are now
relieved, and that your tranquil
life will not be subjected to such

another interruption. My brother
Sid. is with me here, and wishes
to be kindly remembered to you and
Elvira, and my Mother and the
girls would write with him in
kind wishes, were they here.

Give my best regards to Elvira,
and a happy Newyear to her and
Miss Barker, if the latter is with
you. Need I say, that you, I hope,
will have a happier Newyear than
the last; if an entirely happy one, is
more than any of us can expect.
I do not see your friend Miss Lane
in N. C. (as I do not know her) or
I should give her your kind wishes,
but I understood from my Mother,
who saw her at the Theatre, that
she looked extremely well.

With my regards for Mrs Lamb,
whose pleasant face I have not
forgotten, I remain always

Your friend & servant

W Lee

Mrs C C Clemens

"The Herons"

Bladenburg

Mrs d